

## **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Applicant responds herein to the final Office Action dated March 28, 2006. Claims 4 and 9-12 are pending in the present application with claim 4 being in independent form. A copy of the claims indicating the present status of each is included for the convenience of the Examiner.

Claims 4 and 9-12 are rejected as being obvious over Nakamura et al. ("5,627,583") in view of Kato ("4,831,444"). Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

As was noted in Applicant's previous response, among the limitations of independent claim 4 which are neither disclosed nor suggested even in a combination of the art of record are:

wherein the endoscope function adjusting circuit comprises a delay amount adjusting circuit for canceling the effect of a signal delay taking place in a signal cable connecting the solid-state image pickup device to the signal processing circuit, by adjusting timing of pulse-wave drive signals of the solid-state image pickup device....

The Examiner concedes at page 3 of the Office Action that the Nakamura reference fails to show this limitation and points to Kato. Specifically, the Office Action points to Fig. 8C and element 36 of Kato as corresponding to this limitation. The Examiner further notes in response to the arguments set forth in the previous response, that the function of the delay adjusting circuit 36 cited by Applicants with regard to the first embodiment of Kato is different than that described with reference to the fourth embodiment described at Column 7, lines 52-56 of Kato. The Examiner further contends that Kato illustrates a general purpose video processing circuit and an endoscope function adjusting circuit 36 provided in only two substrates in a common signal processing apparatus. The Examiner argues that the video processing circuit of Kato includes elements 38, 40, 34, 32 and 30 on one substrate and the adjusting circuit 36 on another circuit similar to Fig. 2 of the present application where the processing circuit 30 includes element 40, 41, 52, 53, 58, 59 and 32 on one substrate and the adjusting circuit 31 on another substrate. The Examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to employ an endoscope

apparatus as taught by Nakamura to incorporate all of the teachings of Kato for synchronizing a timing signals as well as the layout of Kato. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claim 4 requires that the endoscope function adjusting circuit adjusts timing of the pulse-wave of the drive signals of the solid-state image pickup device. The Examiner refers to Column 7 lines 52-56 of Kato as allegedly discussing this feature. However, the portion of Kato cited by the Examiner discloses that the output of the CCD 20 is provided through supply line 17 through the delay circuit 36 and to the signal processor 30. Thus, Kato discloses that the signals being input into the signal processor 30 from the charge couple device are affected by the delay circuit 36, and not the signals input to drive pulse generator 22.

Independent claim 4 requires that the pulse-wave drive signals of the solid-state image pickup device are affected by the adjusting circuit. In Kato, there is never any modification made to the “drive” signal of drive pulse generator 22.

Further, the Examiner has failed to identify any suggestion or motivation to combine the synchronization features of Kato with the endoscopic apparatus of Nakamura. As noted above and as conceded by the Examiner, Nakamura discloses an endoscope apparatus but does not contemplate any sort of adjusting element. Kato on the other hand relates a typical video camera and makes no mention whatsoever of an endoscope. The Examiner appears to argue that similar structure of the Nakamura reference with that illustrated in Fig. 2 of the present application provides the necessary suggestion to adopt the structure of Kato, however, this is incorrect. Any alleged similarity between Kato and the present application is irrelevant to the relationship between Nakamura and Kato. That is, even if there are similarities in structure between Kato and the present application, the Examiner has failed to identify any suggestion outside of the present application to modify Nakamura in accordance with the teaching of Kato.

Despite the foregoing, and to remove any doubt whatsoever about the patentability of the claims over the prior art, the applicant has now further amended claim 4 by adding that the function of the adjusting circuit is carried out “by only adjusting the timing of the pulse-wave drive signals of the solid-state image pickup device”. This additional modifier, “only”, makes it more clearly understood that the obtained functionality is achieved only by the adjustment of the

pulse-wave drive signals without changing the timing of the signal processing at the signal processing side.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons mentioned above.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, allow the claims and pass this case to issue.

THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING  
SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY  
THROUGH THE UNITED STATES  
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE  
EFS FILING SYSTEM  
ON NOVEMBER 29, 2006

Respectfully submitted,



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